

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of the claims is provided in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.121 and replaces all previous versions and listings of the claims.

1. (currently amended) A method for processing image data comprising:
comparing image data representative of a plurality of images, wherein the plurality of images represent spatially adjacent subject matter;
~~characterizing~~calculating a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in the plurality of images; and
presenting a viewer with ~~indicia of relative~~the calculated levels of change of the image data for the plurality of images.
2. (cancelled)
3. (cancelled)
4. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein calculating the level of change ~~is characterized by comprises~~ analyzing absolute differences between adjacent images in the plurality of images.
5. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein the absolute differences are analyzed on a pixel-by-pixel basis.
6. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein ~~characterizing a~~calculating the level of change of the image data includes ~~characterizing~~calculating change due to noise in the image data, and not including changes due to noise in the presented ~~indicia~~calculated levels of change.

7. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the presented ~~indicia include~~ calculated levels of change comprises a graphical representation of progressive change between images of the plurality of images.

8. (original) The method of claim 7, comprising presenting the viewer with a virtual tool for navigating through the plurality of images based upon the progressive change between the images.

9. (currently amended) A method for diagnosing a patient, comprising:
acquiring a plurality of reconstructed images via a medical imaging system;
comparing image data representative of the plurality of reconstructed images; and
generating a scout navigation tool by characterizing-quantifying a level of change of the
image data from one reconstructed image to the next in the plurality of reconstructed images, the
scout navigation tool including a graphical representation of progressive change between
reconstructed images of the plurality of reconstructed images and a virtual tool for navigating
through the plurality of reconstructed images based upon the level of change.

10. (original) The method of claim 9, comprising displaying the scout navigation tool on a viewable screen.

11. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, comprising receiving inputs from a viewer via the scout navigation tool and displaying reconstructed images from the plurality of reconstructed images based upon the inputs.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, comprising receiving inputs from a viewer via the scout navigation tool and storing reconstructed images from the plurality of reconstructed images based upon the inputs.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, comprising receiving inputs from a viewer via the scout navigation tool and processing reconstructed images from the plurality of reconstructed images based upon the inputs.

14. (original) The method of claim 10, comprising displaying the scout navigation tool adjacent to an image viewing region of the viewable screen.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein the plurality of reconstructed images represent a same subject of interest at different points in time.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein the plurality of reconstructed images represent spatially adjacent subject matter at generally the same point in time.

17. (currently amended) The method of claim 9, wherein the level of change is ~~characterized-quantified by analyzing-determining~~ absolute differences between adjacent reconstructed images in the plurality of reconstructed images.

18. (currently amended) The method of claim 17, wherein the absolute differences are ~~analyzed-determined~~ on a pixel-by-pixel basis.

19. (currently amended) The method of claim 18, wherein ~~characterizing-a-quantifying~~ the level of change of the image data includes characterizing-quantifying change due to noise in the image data, and not including changes due to noise in the ~~presented indicia-graphical representation~~.

20. (currently amended) A system for processing image data comprising:
a memory device for storing image data;
processing circuitry configured to compare image data representative of a plurality of images acquired via a medical imaging system and not as video, and to generate a scout navigation tool by ~~characterizing-computing~~ a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in

the plurality of images, the scout navigation tool including a graphical representation of progressive change between images of the plurality of images and a virtual tool for navigating through the plurality of images based upon the level of change.

21. (original) The system of claim 20, comprising a user viewable display for displaying the scout navigation tool and images from the plurality of images based upon use inputs.

22. (original) The system of claim 21, comprising a user input device for selection of images for viewing from the plurality of images via manipulation of the virtual tool.

23. (original) The system of claim 22, wherein the virtual tool includes a slider displayed adjacent to the graphical representation.

24. (currently amended) A system for diagnosing a patient, comprising:
means for comparing image data representative of a plurality of diagnostic images of the patient acquired via a medical imaging system, wherein the plurality of images represent spatially adjacent subject matter.
means for ~~characterizing~~ calculating a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in the plurality of images; and
means for presenting a viewer with ~~indicia of relative~~ the calculated levels of change of the image data for the plurality of images.

25. (currently amended) A system for processing image data comprising:
means for comparing image data representative of a plurality of images acquired via a medical diagnostic imaging system; and
means for generating a scout navigation tool by ~~characterizing~~ quantifying a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in the plurality of images, the scout navigation tool including a graphical representation of progressive change between images of the plurality of images and a virtual tool for navigating through the plurality of images based upon the level of

change, wherein ~~characterizing-quantifying~~ a level of change of the image data includes ~~characterizing-quantifying~~ change due to noise in the image data.

26. (currently amended) A computer program provided on a computer readable medium and containing computer executable instructions for processing image data, comprising:
at least one computer readable medium; and
code stored on the at least one computer readable medium encoding routines for comparing image data representative of a plurality of images acquired via a medical imaging system, ~~characterizing-calculating~~ a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in the plurality of images, and presenting a viewer with ~~indicia of relative-the calculated~~ levels of change of the image data for the plurality of images, wherein the plurality of images represent spatially adjacent subject matter.

27. (currently amended) A computer program provided on a computer readable medium and containing computer executable instructions for diagnosing a patient, comprising:
at least one computer readable medium; and
code stored on the at least one computer readable medium encoding routines for comparing image data representative of a plurality of images acquired via a medical diagnostic imaging system and not as a video, and generating a scout navigation tool by ~~characterizing~~ computing a level of change of the image data from one image to the next in the plurality of images, the scout navigation tool including a graphical representation of progressive change between images of the plurality of images and a virtual tool for navigating through the plurality of images based upon the level of change.

28. (cancelled)

29. (cancelled)

30. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein calculating a level of change comprises:
- calculating an absolute value of a difference between corresponding areas in a pair of images; and
 - accumulating the absolute values of the differences to determine a difference index for a pair of images.
31. (new) The method of claim 9, wherein quantifying the level of change of the image data from one reconstructed image to the next comprises:
- calculating an absolute value of a difference between corresponding areas in the reconstructed images; and
 - summing the calculated absolute values to determine a difference index for a pair of reconstructed images.